

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-4 and 6-12 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1-4, 6, 9 and 10 are amended, and claim 12 is added. No new matter is added. Support for the claims can be found throughout the specification, including the original claims, and the drawings. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections in view of the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejected claims 1-4, 6, and 8-11 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Nordeen, U.S. Patent No. 4,426,751, in view of Waldhauser, U.S. Patent No. 4,817,233. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 1 recites a vacuum cleaner, comprising a suction head installed at a front end of a suction path, wherein a vacuum pressure generated by a suction motor draws substances in through a suction hole formed in a bottom surface of an outer casing of the suction head and into the suction path, a brush rotatably installed in the suction hole of the suction head, and configured to rotatably contact a surface to be cleaned, and at least one hair tunnel formed in the suction head, wherein an inlet into the at least one hair tunnel and an inlet into the suction hole are spaced apart from each other on the bottom surface of the outer casing with a corresponding portion of the bottom surface of the outer casing positioned therebetween such that the brush installed in the suction hole does not interfere with the at least one hair tunnel, wherein the at least one hair tunnel draws thin and long substances from the surface. Nordeen and Waldhauser, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest all of such

features of independent claim 1, or the claimed combination.

That is, the Office Action asserted that Nordeen discloses “a vacuum cleaner comprising[] a suction head (10)...having a suction hole (11) on a bottom of the suction head...and at least one hair tunnel (25) formed on the suction head such that the at least one hair tunnel and [a] brush do not [] interfere with each other, wherein the at least one hair tunnel preferentially sucks thin and long substances from [a] surface.” The Office Action then acknowledged that Nordeen “lacks, a sweeper provided at an inlet of the at least one hair tunnel that preferentially sucks the thin and long substances from the surface into the at least one hair tunnel.” The Office Action further asserted that “Waldhauser teaches a technique of including a sweeper (36 or 38) installed at [an] inlet unit of a hair tunnel formed by elements (46 and 29[]) for preferentially sucking [] thin and long substances from [a] bottom to the hair tunnel,” referring to Fig. 6 of Waldhauser. The Office Action then concluded that “it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the [vacuum cleaner] of Nordeen, with the known technique of using a sweeper assembly at [the] inlet portion of [the] tunnel, as taught by Waldhauser.”

Nordeen discloses a suction nozzle 10 having a top wall 19 and a bottom wall 19b. A large opening is formed in the bottom wall 19b that accommodates a pair of brushes 16 and 17 and entrances 30 and 31 into transfer passages 25 and 29. Materials picked up by the rotating brushes 16 and 17 are swept substantially directly into the respective transfer passage entrances 30 and 31 by the brushes 16 and 17. Walls 24 and 27 include leading edges 35 and 36 which act as strippers for stripping materials from the respective brushes 16 and 17 clinging to a periphery

thereof at the respective entrances 30 and 31 to the respective transfer passages 25 and 29. The edges 35 and 36 are disposed closely adjacent to the respective brushes 16 and 17 for improved stripping operation. See, for example, Fig. 3, and column 3, lines 41-47 and column 4, lines 12-20 of Nordeen. Substantially the entire bottom surface of Norden's nozzle 10 is open, with the entrances 30 and 31 into the passages 25 and 29 and the space in which the brushes 16 and 17 are installed sharing a single, large opening. Nordeen neither discloses nor suggest that an inlet into the at least one hair tunnel and an inlet into the suction hole are spaced apart from each other on the bottom surface of the outer casing with a corresponding portion of the bottom surface of the outer casing positioned therebetween such that the brush installed in the suction hole does not interfere with the at least one hair tunnel, as recited in independent claim 1.

Waldhauser fails to overcome deficiencies of Nordeen, as it is merely cited for allegedly teaching a sweeper installed at an inlet of a hair tunnel.

Accordingly, the rejection of independent claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Nordeen and Waldhauser should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 2-4, 6, and 8-11, as well as newly added claim 12, are allowable over Nordeen and Waldhauser at least for the reasons discussed above with respect to independent claim 1, from which they depend, as well as for their added features.

The Office Action rejected claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nordeen and Waldhauser, in view of Fernandez-Grandizo Martinez, U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0145425 (hereinafter "Martinez"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

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Dependent claim 7 is allowable over Nordeen and Waldhauser at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claim 1, from which it depends, as well as for its added features. Martinez fails to overcome the deficiencies of Nordeen and Waldhauser, as it is merely cited for allegedly teaching a second sweeper formed in a group bristle shape of a predetermined width. Accordingly, the rejection of dependent claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Nordeen, Waldhauser, and Martinez should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney, at the telephone number listed below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this,

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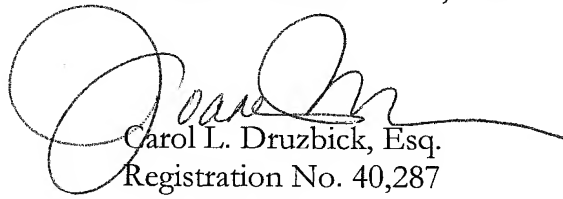
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concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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